

APHORISMS POLITICAL.

The Second Edition Enlarged,

BY

James Harrington.

Obsequium amicos, veritas odium parit.



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I.

THe Errours and Sufferings of the People, are from their Governours.

II.

When the Foundation of a Government cometh to be changed, and the Governours change not the Superstructures accordingly, the People become miserable.

III.

The Monarchy of *England* was not a Government by Arms, but a Government by Laws, though imperfect or ineffectual Laws.

IV.

The Later Governments in *England*, have been Governments by Arms.

V.

The People cannot see, but they can feel.

VI.

The People having felt the difference between a Government by Laws, and a Government by Arms, will always desire the Government by Laws, and abhor that of Arms.

VII.

Where the spirit of the people is impatient of a Government by Arms, and desirous of a Government by Laws, there the spirit of the people is not unfit to be trusted with their Liberty.

VIII.

The spirit of the people of *England*, not trusted with their Liberty, driven at the Restoration of Monarchy by Blood and Violence.

(2)

IX.

The spirit of the people of *England*, trusted with their Liberty, if the form be sufficient, can never set up a King; and if the form be insufficient, (as a Parliament with a Council in the Intervals, or two Assemblies co-ordinate) will set up a King without Blood or Violence.

X.

To light upon a good man, may be in Chance; but to be sure of an Assembly of good men, is not in Prudence.

XI.

Where the Security is no more then Personal, there may be a good Monarch, but can be no good Commonwealth.

XII.

The necessary Action or Use of each thing, is from the nature of the Form.

XIII.

Where the Security is in the Persons, the Government maketh good men evil; where the Security is in the Form, the Government maketh evil men good.

XIV.

Assemblies legitimately elected by the People, are that only Party which can govern without an Army.

XV.

Not the Party which cannot govern without an Army, but the Party which can govern without an Army, is the Refined Party, as to this intent and purpose truly Refined; that is, by Popular Election, according to the Precept of *Moses*, and the Rule of Scripture: *Take ye wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.*

XVI.

The People are deceived by Names, but not by Things.

XVII.

(3)
XVII.

Where there is a well-ordered Commonwealth, the people are generally satisfied.

XVIII.

Where the people are generally dissatisfied, there is no Commonwealth.

XIX.

The parties in *England* declaring for a Commonwealth, hold every one of them something that is inconsistent with a Commonwealth.

XX.

To hold that the Government may be managed by a few, or by a party, is inconsistent with a Commonwealth; except in a Situation like that of *Venice*.

XXI.

To hold that there can be any National Religion or Ministry without publick Indowment and Inspection of the Magistracy, or any Government without a National Religion or Ministry, is inconsistent with a Commonwealth.

XXII.

To hold that there may be Liberty, and not Liberty of Conscience, is inconsistent with a Commonwealth that hath the Liberty of her own Conscience, or that is not Popish.

XXIII.

Where Civil Liberty is entire, it includes Liberty of Conscience.

XXIV.

Where Liberty of Conscience is entire, it includes Civil Liberty.

XXV.

Either Liberty of Conscience can have no security at all, or under Popular Government must have the greatest security.

XXVI.

(4)

XXVI.

To hold that a Government may be introduced by a little at once, is to wave Prudence, & commit things unto Chance.

XXVII.

To hold that the Wisdom of God in the Formation of an House, or of a Government, goeth not universally upon natural principles, is inconsistent with Scripture.

XXVIII.

To hold that the wisdom of man in the Formation of an House, or of Government, may go upon supernatural principles, is inconsistent with a Commonwealth, and as if one should say, God ordained the Temple, therefore it was not built by Masons; He ordained the Snuffers, therefore they were not made by a Smith.

XXIX.

To hold that Hirelings, (as they are termed by some) or an endowed Ministry, ought to be removed out of the Church, is inconsistent with a Commonwealth.

XXX.

Nature is of God.

XXXI.

Some part in every Religion is natural.

XXXII.

An universal Effect, demonstrateth an universal Cause.

XXXIII.

An Universal Cause is not so much natural, as it is Nature it self.

XXXIV.

Every man, either unto his Terrour or Consolation, hath some sense of Religion.

XXXV.

Man may rather be defined a Religious, then a Rational creature; in regard that in other creatures there may be some-

something of Reason, but is nothing of Religion.

XXXVI.

Government is of humane Prudence, and humane Prudence is adequate unto Mans Nature.

XXXVII.

The Prudence or Government that is regardless of Religion, is not adequate nor satisfactory unto Mans Nature.

XXXVIII.

Where the Government is not adequate or satisfactory unto Mans Nature, it can never be quiet or perfect.

XXXIX.

The major part of mankind giveth it self up in the matter of Religion unto the publick leading.

XL.

That there may be a publick leading, there must be a National Religion.

XLI.

VWhere the minor part taketh away the National Religion, there the major part is deprived of the Liberty of Conscience by the minor.

XLII.

VWhere the major part is deprived of the Liberty of Conscience by the minor, there they will deprive the minor of that Liberty of Conscience which they might otherwise enjoy.

XLIII.

In *Israel* there was an endowed Clergie or Priesthood, and a National Religion under Inspection of the Magistrate: whence the Christians in Apostolick Times, defraying their own Ministry, could have Liberty of Conscience; whereas if the Christians by going about to take away Tythes, and abolish the National Religion, had endeavoured to violate the Consciences of the unconverted Jews, these being far greater

ter in number, must needs have taken away the Liberty of Conscience from the Christians.

XLIV.

Paul in *Athens* could freely and undisturbedly convert *Dionysius* and others; therefore in *Athens* there was Liberty of Conscience: but if *Paul* and his Converts had gone about to drive Hirelings, or an endowed Priesthood or Clergie out of that Church, who seeth not that the *Athenians* would have driven *Paul* and his Converts out of *Athens*?

XLV.

That there may be Liberty of Conscience, there must be a National Religion.

XLVI.

That there may be a National Religion, there must be an endowed Clergy.

XLVII.

Commonwealths have had their wayes of Union. As the *Athenians*, by bringing their Confederates unto Subjection. As the United Provinces, by an equal League. Or as the Romans, by an unequal League. The first way is tyrannical: In the second, one Commonwealth under the League, is no more then another, and each one as to her self hath a Negative: which kinde of Union, is not onely obstructive, but tendeth (as we have seen both in *Holland* and *Switz*) towards Division. In the third way, the Commonwealth uniting other Commonwealths, retaineth unto her self the leading of the whole League, leaving unto each of the rest her own Laws, and her own Liberty.

XLVIII.

Till a Commonwealth be first framed, how such a Commonwealth should make an effectual Union with another Nation, is not possible to be seen.

XLIX. The

The new, unpractised, and heretofore unheard-of Union, (as it is vulgarly spoken) with *Scotland*, by uniting Deputies of divers Nations, not in a Council apart, or by way of States General, as in the United Provinces, but in the standing Councils of some one Commonwealth in the League, is destructive to Liberty both in *England* and in *Scotland*.

L.

If the Commonwealth of *England* receive Deputies from *Scotland* in a greater number then that of her own, she receiveth Law from a forraign Interest, and so loseth her own Liberty.

LI.

If *Scotland* be received in an equal number, it obstructerh the freedom of both, or occasionerh War or Dissention.

LII.

If *Scotland* be received in an interiour number, she receiveth Law from *England*, and so loseth her Liberty. The like is understood of *Ireland*.

LIII.

Whereas a well-ordered Commonwealth should give the Balance to her Confederates, and not receive it from them. The Councils in which divers others are thus united, though in a far inferiour number of Deputies, yet if these lie in wait, or lay their heads together, may be over-ruled, obstructed, or over-balanced by forraign interests.

LIV.

VVhere Countries are divers in their Laws, and yet are to receive Laws one from the other, neither the Commonwealth giving Law, knoweth what to give, nor the Commonwealth receiving Law, understanderh what she receiveth: in which case the Union returnerh unto Force or Confusion.

LV.

The best way of holding a Nation different or not different

rent in Laws, is the Roman, that is, by way of Province.

LVI.

A Province, especially if she have strong holds, may by detraying of a small guard, be kept unto a just League, and for the rest enjoy her own Laws, her own Government, and her perfect Liberty: other wayes of Union, will be found more chargeable, and less effectual, on both sides: for if *England* have no Army in *Scotland*, *Scotland* will receive no Law from *England*; and if *England* have an Army there, her hold consisteth not in the Union, but in the Force. The like is to be understood of *Ireland*.

LVII.

If a Country be very small, and not able to subsist of itself, as *Wales*, it may be safely united and held: but the advantage that *Wales* hath in participation of all Magistracies and Offices, is not that which *England* is able to afford unto such a Country as *Scotland*, without subjecting her neck unto the yoke.

LVIII.

The order of a Commonwealth requireth, that it consist, first, of a Civil; secondly, of a Religious; thirdly, of a Military; and fourthly, of a Provincial Part. The manner of uniting Provinces or different Nations, appertaineth unto the last part; and in the formation of a Commonwealth, to begin with that first, which is naturally last, is to invert the order, and by Consequence the Commonwealth, which indeed is nothing but order.

LIX.

Where there can be any other Government, there can be no Commonwealth.

LX.

Where there can be a Commonwealth, what tumults soever there happen, and which soever prevail, there can be no other Government; that is to say, without forraign invasion, which throughout, I must be understood to except.

(9)

LXI.

If Sir George Booth had prevailed, he must either have introduced a Commonwealth, or have restored a King.

LXII.

If a King were restored, he must either govern by an Army, or by Parliaments.

LXIII.

A King governing now in *England* by an Army, would for the same Causes finde the same effects with the late Protector.

LXIV.

A King governing now in *England* by Parliaments, would finde the Nobility of no effect at all.

LXV.

A Parliament where the Nobility is of no effect at all, is a meer popular Council.

LXVI.

A meer popular Council, will never receive Law from a King.

LXVII.

A meer popular Council giving Law unto a King, becometh thereby a Democracy, or equal Commonwealth; or the difference is no greater then in the imperfection of the Form.

LXVIII.

A Commonwealth or Democracy to be perfect in the Form, must consist especially of such an Assembly, the result whereof, can go upon no interest whatsoever, but that onely which is the common interest of the whole people.

LXIX.

An Assembly consisting of a few, may go upon the interest of one man, as a King; or upon the interest of one party, as that of Divines, Lawyers, and the like; or the interest of themselves, and the perpetuation of their Government.

The popular Assembly in a Commonwealth, may consist of too few, but can never consist of too many.

LXXI.

In every Commonwealth there hath been a popular Assembly. This in *Israel* at the least consisted of twenty four thousand, upon a monthly Rotation. In *Athens*, *Lacedemon*, *Rome*, it consisted of the whole Citizens, that is, of all such as had right in the Commonwealth, whether they inhabited in City or Country. In *Venice* it consisteth of about two thousand. In the Province of *Holland* onely, which containeth eighteen or nineteen Sovereignties, the Popular or resolving Assemblies consist at the least of five hundred Persons: these in the whole Union, may amount unto five or six thousand; in *Switz* I believe they come unto a greater number. And the most of these Assemblies have been perpetually extant.

LXXII.

If the popular Assembly consist of so few, and so eminent persons as are capable of any orderly debate, it is good for nothing but to destroy the Commonwealth.

LXXIII.

If the popular Assembly consist of so many, and for the greater part of so mean persons as are not capable of debate, there must be a Senate to help this defect.

LXXIV.

The Reason of the Senate, is, that a popular Assembly rightly constituted, is not capable of any prudent debate.

LXXV.

The Reason of the popular Assembly, is, that a Senate rightly constituted for debate, must consist of so few and eminent persons, that if they have the result too, they will not resolve according unto the interest of the people, but according to the interest of themselves.

A popular Assembly without a Senate, cannot be wise.

A Senate without a popular Assembly, will not be honest.

The Senate and the popular Assembly being once rightly constituted, the rest of the Commonwealth will constitute it self.

The *Venetians* having slain divers of their Dukes for their Tyranny, and being assembled by such numbers in their great Council as were naturally incapable of debate, pitched upon thirty Gentlemen who were called *Pregati*, in that they were prayed to go apart, and debating upon the Exigence of the Commonwealth, to propose as they thought good unto the great Council; and from thence first arose the Senate of *Venice*, to this day called the *Pregati*; and the Great Council, that is, the Senate and the popular Assembly of *Venice*: and from these two arose all those admirable Orders of that Commonwealth

That a people of themselves should have such understanding as when they of *Venice* did institute their *Pregati* or Senate, is rare.

That a Senate or Council of Governours having supreme power, should institute a popular Assembly, and propose to it, though in all reason it be the far more facile and practicable, is that which is rarer.

The diffusive body of the People is not in a natural capacity of judging; for which cause, the whole judgement and power of the diffusive body of the People must be intirely and absolutely in their collective Bodies, Assemblies or Representatives, or there can be no Commonwealth.

LXXXIII.

To declare that the Assemblies or Representatives of the People have power in some things, and in others not, is to make the diffusive Body, which is in a natural incapacity of judging, to be in a political capacity of judging.

LXXXIV.

To bring a natural incapacity of judging, unto a political capacity of judging, is to introduce Government. To bring a natural incapacity of judging, to such a collective or political capacity of judging, as yet necessarily must retain the interest of the diffusive Body, is to introduce the best kind of Government. But to lay any appeal whatsoever from a political capacity of judging, to a natural incapacity of judging, is to frustrate all Government, and to introduce Anarchy. Nor is Anarchy, whether imposed or obtruded by the Legislator first, or by the People, or their Demagogues or Incendiaries afterwards, of any other kinde whatsoever, then of this onely.

LXXXV.

To make Principles or Fundamentals, belongeth not unto Men, unto Nations, nor unto humane Laws. To build upon such Principles or Fundamentals as are apparently laid by GOD in the inevitable necessity or Law of Nature, is that which truly appertaineth unto Men, unto Nations and unto humane Laws. To make any other Fundamentals, and then build upon them, is to build Castles in the Air.

LXXXVI.

Whatever is violent, is not secure nor durable; whatever is secure or durable, is natural.

LXXXVII.

Government in the whole People, though the Major part were disaffected, must be secure and durable, because it wavereth

waveth Force, to found it self upon Nature.

LXXXVIII. Government in a Party, though all of these were well-affected, must be in-secure, and transitory, because it waveth Nature, to found it self upon Force.

LXXXIX. Commonwealths, of all other Governments, are more especially for the preservation, not for the destruction of Mankind.

XC.

Commonwealths that have been given to cut off their diseased Limbs, (as *Florence*) have brought themselves unto impotence and ruine. Commonwealths that have been given unto healing their diseased Limbs (as *Venice*) have been healthful and flourishing.

XC. *Athen* under the Oligarchy of four hundred, was infinitely more afflicted and torn with Distracti^on; Blood and Animositie of Parties, then is *England*; yet by introduction of a Senate of four hundred, and a popular Assembly of five thousand, did thereupon, so suddenly, as if it had been a Charm, recover Might and Glory. See the eighth Book of Thucydides. A Story in these Times most necessary to be considered.

XCII. To leave our selves and Posterity to a farther Purchase in Blood or Sweat, of that which we may presently possesse, enjoy, and hereafter bequeath unto Posterity in Peace and Glory, is inhumane and impious.

XCIII. As certainly and suddenly as a good state of health dispelleth the Peevishness and Peril of Sicknes, doth a good state of Government, the Animosity and Danger of Parties:

XCIV.

The Frame of a Commonwealth having first been proposed and considered, Expedients (in case such should be found necessary for the safe, effectual and perfect introduction of the same) may with some aim be applied or fitted; as to an House, when the Model is resolved upon, we fit Scaffolds in building. But first to resolve upon Expedients, and then to fit unto them the Frame of a Commonwealth, is as if one should set up Props, and then build a House to lean upon them.

As the chief Expedients in the building of an House are Axes and Hammers; so the chief Expedient in the building of a Government; is a standing Army.

As the House, which being built, will not stand without the perpetual noise or use of Axes & Hammers, is imperfect; so the Government, which being formed, cannot support it self without the perpetual use of a standing Army.

While the Civil and Religious Parts of a Commonwealth are in forming, there is a necessity that she should be supported by an Army; but when the Military and Provincial Parts are rightly formed, she can have no farther use of any other Army. Wherefore at this point, and not till then, her Armies are by the practise of Commonwealths, upon slighter occasions, to have half pay for life, and to be disbanded.

Where there is a standing Army, and not a formed Government, there the Army of necessity will have Dictatorian power.

Where an Army subsisteth upon the Pay or Riches of a Single

Single Person, or of a Nobility, that Army is always Monarchical. Where an Army subsisteth not by the Riches of a Single Person, nor of a Nobility, that Army is always Popular.

The English Armies are popular Armies.

CY.

Where Armies are popular, and exercise Dictatorian power in deposing Single Persons, and Monarchical Assemblies, there can be no greater, nor needs any other Expedient for the introduction of a Commonwealth. Nevertheless unto this may be added some such moderate Qualifications as may prune the Commonwealth, nor lop off her Branches. Whom these will not satisfy, it is not a Commonwealth, but a Party, that can.

CIL.

If the late King had freely permitted unto the People the exercise of the power inevitably devolved upon them by the change of the Balance, he had not been destroyed. If either of the late Single Persons had brought the People into an orderly exercise of the power devolved upon them, he had been great. What Party soever shall hinder the People from the exercise of the power devolved upon them, shall be certainly ruined: who or what party soever shall introduce the People into the due and orderly exercise of the power devolved upon them, shall be forthwith secure, and famous for ever.

CIII.

A man useth, nourisheth and cherisheth his Body, without understanding it; But he that made the Body, understood it.

CIV.

The reason why the Nations that have Commonwealths, use them so well, and cherish them so much, and yet that so

C

few

few Nations have Commonwealths; is, That in using a Commonwealth, it is not necessary it should be understood: but in making a Commonwealth, that it be understood, is of absolute necessity. *Caput Reipublica est nosse Rempub.* Cicero.

CK.

As the natural Body of a Christian or Saint can be no other, for the frame, then such as hath been the natural Body of an Israelite or of an Heathen; so the political Bodies, or civil Governments of Christians or Saints, can be no other, for the frame, then such as have been the political Bodies or civil Governments of the Israelites, or of the Heathens.

CKI.

It shall be as soon found when and where the foot of a Man was in the Body of a Beast, as when or where the Soul or Freedom natural unto Democracie, was in any other Form, then that onely of a Senate, and an Assembly of the People.

CKII.

In those things wherein, and so far as, Art is directed or limited by the nature of her Materials, it is in Art as in Nature.

CKIII.

That Democracie, or equal Government by the People, consist of an Assembly of the People, and a Senate, is that whereby Art is altogether directed, limited and necessitated by the nature of her Materials.

CKIV.

As the Soul of Man can never be in the Body of a Beast, unless GOD make a new Creation; so neither the Soul or Freedom natural unto Democracie in any other Form whatsoever, then that onely of a Senate, and a popular Assembly.

CKV.

(17)

CX.

The right Constitution, coherence and proper Symmetry of a Form of Government goeth for the greater part upon Invention.

CXI.

Reason is of two Parts; Invention, and Judgement.

CXII.

Judgement is most perfect in an Assembly,

CXIII.

Invention is most perfect in one Man.

CXIV.

In one Man, Judgement wanteth the strength which is in a multitude of Counsellours.

CXV.

In a multitude of Counsellours, Invention is none at all.

XCVI.

Through the defect of Invention, the wisest Assemblies in the Formation or Reformation of Government, have pitched upon a sole Legislator.

XCVII.

It is not below the Dignity of the greatest Assembly, but according unto the practice of the best Commonwealths, to admit of any man that is able to propose to them, for the good of his Country.

CXVIII.

Unto the making of a well-ordered Commonwealth, there goeth little more of pains or charge, or work without doors, then the Establishment of an equal or apt Division of the Territory, and the proposing of such Election unto the Divisions so made, as from an equal Foundation, may raise equal Superstructures; the rest being but paper-work, is as soon done, as said or voted.

CXIX.

VWhere such Elections are proposed, as being made by the People, must needs produce a well-ordered Senate and Popular.

Popular Assembly, and the People (who as we have already found by experience, stick not at like work) elect accordingly; there not the Proposers of any power in themselves, but the whole People by their peculiar and natural Right and power, do institute and ordain their whole Commonwealth.

CXX.

The highest earthly Felicity that a People can ask, or GOD can give, is an equal and well-ordered Commonwealth. Such an one among the Israelites, was the Reign of GOD; and such an one (for the same Reason) may be among Christians the Reign of CHRIS, though not every one in the Christian Commonwealth should be any more a Christian indeed, then every one in the Israelitish Commonwealth was an Israelite indeed.

Septem. 13. 1659.

ERRATA.

Aphor. 47. line 1. for *their wayes*, read *thru wayes*.